

Annual Leave

Eligibility

Annual leave is provided by law and accrues automatically to permanent employees and temporary employees who are serving under appointments that exceed 90 days. Temporary employees who are on appointments limited to 90 days or less become entitled to annual leave once they have been employed **continuously** for 90 days. This entitlement exists regardless of how many successive appointments the employee serves before completing the 90-day waiting period provided there is no break in service between the appointments. Once s/he completes 90 days, the employee is credited with the leave that accrued to him or her during that period.

Accrual

Full-time employees earn 13, 20, or 26 days of annual leave each leave year, depending on their years of service. Employees with less than three years of service earn 13 days each year, employees with between three and 15 years of service earn 20 days each year and employees with 15 or more years of service earn 26 days each year. Part-time employees earn leave on a pro-rated basis. During the first three years, they earn one hour of leave for every 20 hours in a pay status. Between their third and fifteenth year, they earn one hour of leave for every 13 hours in a pay status; and, after their fifteenth year, they earn one hour of leave for every ten hours in a pay status. Most employees have a maximum accumulation of 30 days each year. Employees who work outside the United States, unless they were hired locally, can accumulate up to 45 days each year. Employees forfeit any leave to their credit at the end of the leave year that exceeds the limit. Employees can have the leave restored if the forfeiture meets the provisions described in the next paragraph.

Annual Leave Accounts Upon Separation

At separation, an employee is entitled to payment for all annual leave s/he has earned. This includes the regular carryover balances from the previous year, if any; the current leave year's unused earned leave; and, any unused restored leave that has not reached the two year expiration date.

If an employee receives a lump-sum payment and is then re-employed by the government before the end of the period covered by the payment, s/he must refund an amount equal to the gross compensation received for the unexpired portion of the lump sum leave period. This includes pay before deductions of any kind and, if applicable, differentials and allowances received as well.

Sick Leave

Eligibility

Both permanent and temporary employees earn sick leave. The earning rate differs based on their work schedules. All full-time employees, regardless of their length of service, earn four hours of sick leave each full biweekly pay period. Part-time employees earn one hour of leave for every 20 hours in a pay status. Employees do not accrue sick leave in pay periods where leave without pay or absence without leave reaches 80 hours. Intermittent employees do not earn sick leave.

Flexible Work Schedules

The basic flexible work schedule concept is a simple one. A flexible schedule splits the work day into two types of time: core time and flexible time. During core time all employees must be at work. Additional periods of flexible time are established during which employees have the option of selecting and varying their starting and quitting time within limits set by management for the organization or installation.

The two requirements of any flexible work schedule program are:

- (1) employees must be present during core time; and
- (2) employees must work the number of hours for which contracted, for example, a 40-hour week in the case of a full-time employee, or a lesser number of hours for a part-time employee. Beyond these minimal requirements, the precise working hours can be established in whatever way is consistent with accomplishment of the organization's operational needs, the wishes of the employee, and any legal or regulatory restrictions.

A flexible work schedule is not simply a rearrangement of work hours, but a step away from a rigidly controlled work environment. Flexible schedules place more responsibility on both supervisors and employees and require a greater measure of trust and confidence between the parties.

Compressed Work Schedules

Compressed work schedules have a basic work requirement of 80 hours in a biweekly pay period for full-time employees. For part-time employees, the basic work requirement is less than 80 hours which may be scheduled for less than 10 workdays.

The tour of duty is defined by the particular schedule the installation or organization chooses to establish. For all compressed work schedules, the tour of duty is arranged in such a way that employees on these schedules will fulfill their basic work requirements in less than 10 days during the biweekly pay period.

Two types of compressed work schedules are:

1. Four-day Workweek
2. 5-4/9 Plan

Supervisors should be cautioned that compressed work schedules place more responsibility on both supervisors and employees and requires a greater measure of trust and confidence between parties.

For more information on leave policies and Flexible Work Schedules, please refer to Regulation CEORPR 690-1-9 or contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

Pay Increases

Within-grade Increases

Within-grade increases are pay increases received by federal employees after they have serviced a specific amount of time at a certain grade level and demonstrated at least an acceptable level of performance.

Within-grade increases are also known as step increases. Employees who are not at the highest step of their grade are entitled to receive the within-grade raise authorized for the next step of their position as long as they complete the required waiting period, have received at least a fully successful or equivalent rating for their most recent performance appraisal period, and did not receive an equivalent increase during the waiting period. Waiting period for within-grade increases for all general schedule grades are as follows:

- 52 calendar weeks to be advanced to steps 2, 3 and 4;
- 104 calendar weeks to be advanced to steps 5,6, and 7; and
- 156 calendar weeks to be advanced to steps 8,9, and 10

Waiting period for step for wage grade:

- 26 calendar weeks to be advanced to step 2;
- 78 calendar weeks to be advanced to step 3;
- 104 calendar weeks to be advanced to step 4 and 5

Annual Pay Raises

The general schedule pay increase for federal employees this year has averaged 3.7 percent, with 2.7 percent of the pay hike representing an across the board increase for GS employees and the remaining 1.0 percent representing the 2001 locality pay increase. Pay raises for area localities were calculated based on Bureau of Labor Statistics surveys of federal versus non-federal salaries. Locality pay increases reflect the amount of the pay increase that government officials determined was required for general schedule employees working in different geographic locations. The locality raises, along with the 2.7 percent across the board increase going to most GS workers, become effective the first full pay period in January. Other features of the locality pay program are:

- Special rate employees (those who receive occupation-related higher pay) received the larger of their special rate or their locality rate.
- Blue-collar employees paid under the wage grade systems received in 2001 average pay raises capped at the average 3.7 increase amount paid to GS employees.

For the latest information on federal pay, go to OPM's website at www.opm.gov.